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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LUANDA 000342

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PARM](#) [AO](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR EFIRD MEETS WITH NEW ANGOLAN MINISTER
OF THE INTERIOR

REF: A. LUANDA 161
[1](#)B. LUANDA 283

LUANDA 00000342 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Amb Cynthia G. Efird for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary:

[1](#)1. (SBU) New Angolan Interior Minister Ngongo told Ambassador Efird that he supports human rights and free elections, and accountability and transparency in police actions. He hopes to continue close cooperation with the USG in ILEA training programs, and engage in the newly funded civilian small arms collection and destruction program. He also provided us with the results of an investigation into a recent alleged police abuse, in response to a March letter from Ambassador Efird. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Ambassador Efird called on the new Angolan Minister of the Interior, General Roberto Leal Ramos Monteiro, Ngongo,, on April 6, 2006. Ambassador Efird was accompanied by Pol/Econ chief, Minister Ngongo was joined by an assistant and a translator. Ngongo was sworn in as Minister of the Interior in March 2006, following the death of previous Interior Minister van Dunem (reftel A). This was Minister Ngongo,s first appointment with a foreign Ambassador in Luanda.

USG: Continued Cooperation on Human Rights and Rule of Law

[1](#)3. (SBU) Ambassador Efird expressed our condolences on Minister Van Dunem,s death and welcomed Ngongo's very positive formal official statements in the press regarding transparency and justice since taking office. She remarked on the past cooperation enjoyed by the USG and the Ministry, detailing the 160 Angolan police trained through the ILEA programs in Botswana and New Mexico, and our current support of the civilian disarmament program implemented by the HALO Trust NGO in conjunction with local police. Ambassador Efird invited the Minister to accompany her to watch HALO and the police destroy collected weapons. He appeared enthusiastic to accompany us on such a visit.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Ambassador Efird also spoke of US interest in Angola,s support for human rights, citing the recent release of the Human Rights Report. She discussed the importance of political tolerance in conjunction with the upcoming voter registration process, and hoped that the police would be able to ensure the rights of all citizens participating in the election process. She also offered technical assistance and capacity building to focus on these issues.

Angola Committed to Upholding Human Rights

15. (SBU) Minister Ngongo commented that he was committed to the establishment of democratic process in Angola, but noted that this is a country which has grown out of violence) first against the colonial powers and then in civil war. He lamented the number of generations who have been raised in a culture of violence. Ngongo commented that, while achievements have been made, timetables to achieve the end result of democracy can vary. He said that sometimes international pressure can spur the GRA to find solutions to problems more quickly.

16. (SBU) Minister Ngongo also thanked the Ambassador for her letter raising the recent shooting of a young boy in Luanda during the evacuation and demolition of a housing project (reftel B). He noted that he had called for a full investigation, which determined that the person in possession of the weapon was not a policeman. This man has since been imprisoned. He issued an open invitation for Embassy representatives, NGOs and the press to meet with the man in jail should we wish. He added that the Ministry had provided this information to the media. Further, he requested that the Ambassador continue to inform him of any such events in the future.

17. (SBU) Ambassador Efird thanked him for this information and his interest in looking into the incident. With reference to the Human Rights Report, she suggested that it would be helpful if the Ministry could make available statistics to the Embassy to demonstrate that it is solving open cases and according due process to those suspected of crimes. She also specifically requested statistics on GRA efforts in combatting trafficking in persons. The Minister expressed surprise that this information wasn't openly available, asking his aide, What, we don't publish this?, He recognized the importance of maintaining transparency in police actions and in being open with the press.

LUANDA 00000342 002.2 OF 002

Comment and Biographical Information:

18. (SBU) Minister Ngongo was very engaging and made a point of noting that he chose to receive Ambassador Efird first among all the Ambassadors in Angola. In this first official conversation, he certainly said all the right things. His prompt action in the case of the young boy is very encouraging and we hope this will be indicative of his tenure as Minister. End Comment.

Biographical Information:

19. (U) Roberto Leal Ramos Monteiro, best known as General Ngongo, was born in Luanda in 1945. He joined the MPLA in 1971, enlisting in the FAPLA (MPLA military wing) in 1974, then became Head of the Artillery Unit (1976-1978), then Head of Reconnaissance and Information Division (1978-1983). Between 1983 and 1988, General Ngongo was Deputy Army Chief of Staff and Head of Military Operations. He was appointed Head of Defense and Security (1989-1990), Chief of Air Staff (1991-1992) and later Vice Minister for Defense (1993-1999). General Ngongo was appointed Ambassador to Russia in 2000, where he remained until his appointment as Minister of the Interior in March 2006.

110. (C) Ngongo was born into an old Angolan-Portuguese family strongly linked to the MPLA and the GRA. Family members include ex-finance Minister Alcantara Monteiro, Vice Minister of Justice, Alves Monteiro, and Senior Board Member of the Central Bank, Laura Monteiro. However, Ngongo's branch of the family arose from an illegitimate relationship and is not recognized by the rest of the Monteiro family. Ngongo has a reputation among Luanda's elite as hasty in making decisions and having a tendency to drink heavily. He has an expansive and enthusiastic personality. He also showed a great interest in culture and history, especially in the context of his years in Russia. While Ngongo conducted the meeting in Portuguese, he appeared to have a firm command of English

comprehension and conversational English.
EFIRD